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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY	USSR	REPORT		
SUBJECT	Soviet Intelligence Policy toward Visa Applicants and Visitors to the USSR	DATE DISTR.	30 July	1953
DATE OF INFO. PLACE ACQUIRED		REQUIREMENT NO.	RĎ	25X
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CORRECTION

An Information Report with the above heading was issued on 16 July 1953. Sentence 2, paragraph 2 should read: "The NKVD considered all foreigners, hostile or friendly, not from the standpoint of security risks, but from the standpoint of whether or not they could be recruited for Soviet political or military intelligence. The NKVD was not actually afraid"

25 YEAR RE-REVIEW

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as the OVIR (Otdel Vis i Registratsii Inostrantsev). Formally this organ-	25)
ization was part of the Moscow Militia Directorate, but actually its	
function was to study foreigners admitted to the Soviet Union for the purpose of establishing their fitness for intelligence work.	
In 1940 or 1941 OVIR was in charge of clearing admittances to territories	
newly acquired by the USSR. These territories, although annexed to the USSR, were still considered foreign territory and everyone going there	0.53
was required to get a propusk (pass). Its offices were located at Bolshoy Cherkasskiy Perculok,	25)
which was in the center of the NKVD area of Lubyanka. The officials	
wore the uniform of the Soviet Militia.	
the study of a foreigner was started	25)
by OVIR immediately upon reception of the application for a Soviet	
visa at any Soviet embassy abroad. The office of the chief of the Consular Service or of the Consul General informed the Second Secre-	
tary of the Embassy who ex officio was a member of the intelligence	
service, and through appropriate channels started collecting information about the applicant	25)
the information section of the local Communist Party, although the Soviet	25.
Embassy also had files where information on persons of interest to the USSR was gathered. The results of the first investigations were	
sent to Moscow through the Visa Section of the NKID to the OVIR NKVD.	
These findings were evidently immediately sent to the INO and the Military Intelligence. After the INO and Military Intelligence arrived	
at a decision, it was reported to a special commission of the Central	
Committee of the Communist Party (Komissiva po Vyezdu). Then, if INO and Military Intelligence wanted the applicant to come to the USSR, they	
instructed the proper embassy to grant the entry visa.	
After the visa was granted, the study of the foreigner was continued. Then,	
however, the emphasis was on the personal characteristics of the visitor	
rather than upon his background, as was the case in the preliminary investigation. Information on the personal characterististics of the visitor	
was then gathered from the files of the information section of the Soviet	* *
Embassy and from reports of investigators assigned as a team to study the vi	sitor.
The type of information which was of interest was good and bad personality traits, strength or weakness of character, susceptibility to women,	
drinking, money, and the visitor's political sympathies.	
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This policy of studying applicants for visas for possible intelligence	e e
agent recruitment was also carried on outside of the USSR where foreigner came in contact with Soviet organizations or persons. For example,	∍ ¬
guests attending diplomatic parties given	-
we the Soviets were acreened for possible use as agents by the USSR.	
a list of diplomats who attended these	
parties	
was actually the beginning of a "big enterprise".	
in the case of many of the persons whose names appeared on the list, nothing was ever done. However, many of the other persons whose names	
appeared on the list were approached by the secret police if there	4
was evidence that they were strongly anti-Fascist, pro-Soviet, or other-	
wise susceptible.	
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